



Ironhorse Desert News



Operation Ivy Cyclone II:

TF Ironhorse demonstrates show of force

Story by Sgt. Troy Chatwin

FORWARD OPERATING BASE OMAHA, TIKRIT, Iraq – Soldiers of Task Force Ironhorse conducted a series of tactical missions by targeting known ambush sites and hideaways used to manufacture improvised explosive devices and conduct other anti-Coalition activities.

The operation, called Ivy Cyclone II, was meant to strike at the heart of anti-Coalition forces who have carried out stealthy attacks against Coalition forces and Iraqi citizens.

Activities ran swiftly and concurrently. Soldiers kicked in

the doors of structures used by suspected insurgents, targeted other buildings used for subversive activities, and dropped 500-pound bombs on identified military targets during the late-night strikes.

Units across the task force were involved in the raids, including the 299th Engineer Battalion and the 3rd Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment.

“We want to rid our (area) of known terrorist elements and terrorist facilities to prevent future attacks,” said Maj. Ronald Zimmerman, an operations officer with the 299th and a native of Shannon, Ill.

Operations carried out against IED makers generally followed the same pattern: plan and rehearse the mission, storm the buildings and detain the suspected attackers.

Structures targeted because they have been repeatedly used by the enemy to conduct anti-Coalition activities were cleared of people and destroyed, preventing the enemy from using them again.



Photo by Sgt. Troy Chatwin

Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 299th Engineer Battalion, roll a 1,000-pound bomb into a room in preparation of destroying a building suspected of being involved in making bombs to be used against Coalition forces.

Denying the enemy the use of the structure was accomplished in various ways, whether it involved flattening them with tanks, firing rockets from aircraft overhead, or rolling a 1,000-pound bomb in the front door.

Other objectives accomplished by the task force were to destroy known ambush sites by bombing berms and abandoned buildings used to attack Coalition forces.

“We were getting harassed by enemy mortars,” said Maj. Mike Pancier of Westerly, R.I., the tank battalion operations officer. “We preempted possible attacks by firing at points they might use.”

“This group of buildings was
--CYCLONE continued on page 2



Photo by Sgt. Troy Chatwin

During a late-night raid Nov. 19, 2003, soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 299th Engineer Battalion clear rooms of a building suspected as being a site for making improvised explosive devices.



--**CYCLONE continued from page 1**
 raided earlier," said Sgt. Kevin Easter, a 299th scout squad leader from Dallas, Texas. "This time we will destroy it so it can't be used again."

The raids continued on as planned.

After racing through dense brush and into the courtyard between a group of buildings in one village south of Tikrit, the scouts of 299th piled out of their vehicles and secured the area.

"Once we got all the people moved out of the area, we rolled the thousand-pounder into (the building) and wired it up," said Easter.

After everyone moved to safety and the fuse burned off, the building was destroyed in a flash.

"These locations won't be used to attack Coalition forces or Iraqis again," said Zimmerman.

As the convoy of U.S. forces rolled back into FOB Omaha, the assault leader's voice crackled

over the radio.

"Good job tonight guys," he said. "We hit them hard. Tonight will make it safer for our forces."



Photo by Sgt. Troy Chatwin

Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 299th Engineering Battalion search rooms in a building suspected of being used in anti-Coalition attacks.

Soldiers keeping basic skills honed

Story by Spc. Benjamin Kibbey
 CAMP LANCER, BAYJI, Iraq—
 As Army Chief of Staff, Gen. Peter J. Shoomaker said recently, every soldier, regardless of his or her job, is a rifleman first.

During Ivy Cyclone II, a series of tactical missions conducted across Task Force Ironhorse, and throughout other operations, this concept is being applied out of necessity as many soldiers assume traditional infantry roles.

For the members of 3rd Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment, conducting convoy security, raids and patrols are everyone's responsibility.

"I thought this would just be a

computer job, chilling in the office and fixing computers," said Pfc. Jeff Vandousen, a native of Bay City, Mich. and a computer operator systems analyst specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3-66th.

When he joined the Army a year and a half ago, Vandousen said he was looking for college money and a job where he could get some computer expertise.

However, ever since 4th Infantry Division entered theater as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom, soldiers from every job field have been called on to perform frontline duties in places where there are no frontlines.

There was a certain element of surprise in being tasked for convoy security, said Pfc. David L. Young II, who is from Rutherfordton, N.C. and performs the same job as Vandousen.

"At first, I was like, 'So, you taking computers out with you?' and they were like, 'No, we need

security,'" Young said. "Before I got here, as far as busting down doors, I didn't think I'd be doing that."

Since that first surprise mission, filling in as security on convoys and missions has just become another part of regular duties for the computer technicians.

"Whenever they have a mission, if they need my assistance, if they need an extra body, they come and get me," Young said.

However, the first time wasn't without trepidation, Vandousen said.

"I was really paranoid," he said, referring to the first time he was required to pull convoy security. "I thought I was going to get shot at every second."

Although this was not the work he had anticipated when he first entered the Army 16 months ago, Young said he was prepared.

--**SKILLS continued on page 5**

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Engineers eliminate dangerous ammo sites one bunker at a time

Story by Spc. Melissa Walther

AMMUNITION SUPPLY POINT NORTH, TIKRIT, Iraq – Rocket propellants crunched underfoot as green chemical lights gave off an eerie glow and sparkled off white blocks of C-4 and a forest of tank rounds.

Members of A Company, 299th Engineer Battalion climbed over tank rounds, crates of ammunition, rocket-propelled grenades and other explosives so they could distribute 100-pound bombs throughout the bunker.

The ends of the bombs were removed and packed with C-4 and a blasting cap in preparation for destroying the bunker. The activity, though tedious, is important because too many munitions are finding their way into the hands of insurgents carrying out acts against Coalition forces.

“We’ve done this almost every day for the past eight months,” said Sgt. Aaron Cook, a 299th squad leader from Cincinnati, Ohio.

With six ammunition supply points in the Task Force Ironhorse area, each with hundreds of bunkers and millions of rounds to destroy, the 299th has plenty to keep them busy.

“We destroy them to keep them away from the looters,” said Cook.

Stolen munitions are known to have been used in attacks on Coalition forces.



Photo by Spc. Melissa Walther

Sgt. DuJuan Moore, a team leader with A Company, 299th Engineer Battalion tapes sticks of C-4 to a crate containing ammunition. The bunker at Ammunition Supply Point North was one of more than 100 the 299th is destroying to keep munitions out of the hands of insurgents.

At this site, which boasted more than 100 bunkers of munitions, less than 20 remain.

According to Cpl. Paul Borer, a team leader with the 299th and a New Riegel, Ohio native, there are two procedures used to destroy the thousands of rounds found in a bunker.

“We use gasoline for bunkers with smaller rounds and just let it burn off,” he said. “For larger bunkers and larger rounds, we rig it with C-4 or plastique. We don’t bomb from the air because it doesn’t destroy the rounds. It just scatters them; makes it easier for the looters.”

While the engineers were preparing the bunkers, local residents a mile away were warned of the coming explosion. The highway was blocked off and the camp at ASP North was evacuated.

“This bunker is one of the larger ones - we’re probably destroying five tons of rounds today,” said Sgt. DuJuan Moore, a 299th team leader from Palm Beach, Fla. “Shrapnel sometimes hits the camp so we evacuate and warn the local villages that there will be an explosion.”

After a bunker is blown, the engineers wait three days before returning to the site to make sure that everything targeted is destroyed.

“It takes a while for things to die down,” Cook said.

A team of three people in a Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicle is all that is left at the bunker to pull the fuse.

“We use timed fuses and we only have five minutes to get away,” Cook said. “There will be a big boom. And there will be destruction. And it will be good.”



Photo by Sgt. Troy Chatwin

An ammunition supply point north of Tikrit goes up in a plume of smoke Nov. 15, 2003 – the handiwork of A Company, 299th Engineer Battalion. Among the munitions destroyed were warheads, rocket mortars, tank rounds and sabot rounds.



Flying high with Raider Brigade

Story by Spc. Melissa Walther

CAMP RAIDER, TIKRIT, Iraq – An ancient symbol of strength and wisdom to the Arab people, the falcon is now a symbol of friendship between Iraqis and members of the 1st Brigade Combat Team.



Photo by Spc. Melissa Walther

Sky Raider, an Arabian falcon that was a gift to 1st Brigade Combat Team from Jasim Hammed Jabarah Jubutia, the governor of the Salah Ad Din province, stands watch at Camp Raider.

An Arabian falcon, known locally as a shahean, was given to the brigade by Jasim Hammed Jabarah Jubutia, the governor of the Salah Ad Din province, as a gesture of friendship, said Lt. Col. Troy Smith, 1st BCT's executive officer.

According to Smith, the falcon was given in appreciation for the brigade restoring order to the community.

Named Sky Raider by the soldiers, the majestic bird has become an unofficial mascot for the Raider Brigade, as well as a common sight in the tactical operations center at Camp Raider.

"The falcon is a symbol of Iraq," said Spc. Yusef Al-Ghamdi, a tanker from Killen, Texas who acts as an interpreter with B Company, 1st Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment. "It's a very expensive gift."

Not only is Al-Ghamdi a tanker and interpreter, he is also knowledgeable about training falcons, a talent he picked up while working for an oil

--FALCON continued on page 5

Entry police program teaches basic skills

Story by Spc. Samuel Soza

TIKRIT, Iraq – Because there is a need to get police officers back in the streets in the Salah Ad Din province, there is also a need to ensure that aspiring police are readily prepared.



Photo by Spc. Melissa Walther

Staff Sgt. Harry Darden, a Transition Integration Program instructor with the 401st Military Police Company, plays the part of a suspect as Iraqi students observe.

To raise that preparedness level, the fifth class of would-be Iraqi police officers began their second week of a three-week Transition Integration Program, which teaches basic police tactics and procedures.

The program, which was created in July by soldiers of the 720th Military Police Battalion from Fort Hood, Texas, is a prerequisite for Iraqis to attend the longer, extensive police academy.

Participants receive various classes covering basic human rights, including freedom of religion and speech, as well as the rights of women and children, said Staff Sgt. Harry Darden, a TIP instructor with the

401st Military Police Company.

"They're learning how to promote democracy as a police force," said Darden, a native of Fort Worth, Texas.

In addition to human rights, the recruits learn procedures for filing police reports, as well as a weapon safety and familiarization with the AK-47 assault rifle and the 9 mm pistol. The class was scheduled to graduate Nov. 20.

The course work, which has been taught solely by soldiers of the 720th, is being handed off to Iraqis who have graduated from the program. The goal, Darden said, is for the Iraqi police department to take over the local

--TIP continued on page 5



--SKILLS continued from page 2

Despite the extra responsibility, both still fill their technical roles. It's just when duty calls, they're ready.

During one convoy to pick up files from a local oil refinery, the Humvee Vandousen was riding in was struck by an improvised explosive device.

"They threw it off the overpass as we were driving by, and black dirt and gunpowder went up in the air, and it took out the headlights and windshield," said Vandousen. "It was like a car accident; when you get in a big car accident and you're in shock."

With only minor shrapnel wounds to one of the team members, the convoy moved to their objective, and returned later accompanied by Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicles to start searches and vehicle checks.

According to Vandousen, the respectful fear that one has when venturing outside the gates never completely goes away, however he has volunteered to go out on some convoys just for a break from the everyday grind of computer analysis.

"Sometimes when I feel like getting out, I volunteer for them," he said.

As the Army revamps its training and doctrine to prepare soldiers for a battlefield that is becoming more fluid, these two soldiers, with only a few months of experience under their belts, are among the thousands already living the reality.

--TIP continued from page 4

program once the U.S. military steps aside.

"The future intent is for them to teach all of the class," he said.

The Iraqi instructors come out of the program's top ranks, according to Darden.

The current class has a total of 63 men, however, the next class is expected to have three female recruits, according to Sgt. 1st Class Paul W. Chace, commandant of the program.

Female police officers are not normally seen in Iraq. The open enrollment demonstrates that there is more opportunity, according to Chace, an MP with the 411th Military Police Company, a part of the 720th.

"It's part of the change," said Chace, who is from Freetown, Mass. "It's a change for the better. That's what we're trying to teach them."

Every potential officer in the Task Force Ironhorse area is supposed to go through TIP, he said.

Once candidates graduate, they will attend another battalion-hosted academy where they are introduced to advanced policing skills. Afterward, they will assume a regular police position.

"Some will go on and be investigators," Darden said. "Some will be radio operators, (and) communication specialists."

The first TIP class was held in July.

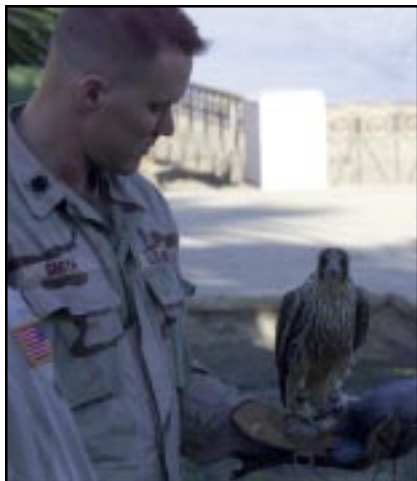
--FALCON continued from page 4

Photo by Spc. Melissa Walther

Lieutenant Col. Troy Smith, 1st Brigade Combat Team's executive officer, holds Sky Raider as he awaits his breakfast.

company in Saudi Arabia.

Al-Ghamdi said he learned falconry when "the princes used to hunt with falcons and they taught me."

That training seems to be paying off as Al-Ghamdi teaches Sky Raider various commands.

"I spend a few hours a day training him," said Al-Ghamdi. "I'm training him to return to the glove without using jesses to tether him."

Caring for a falcon has been challenging, the brigade soldiers have learned,

especially when coming to securing the right food. Part of that responsibility includes getting food for Sky Raider. That usually means gathering wild pigeons every morning.

"We all share in the responsibility of taking care of him," Smith said.

When the soldiers can't bag the falcon's breakfast, they get some live pigeons from local residents.

"We're trying to take good care of him," said Al-Ghamdi. "He's an important gift."



What are you thankful for?

"I'm thankful for my wife and kids. They're taking care of business at home." - Staff Sgt. Isaac Day, non-commissioned officer in charge of the battalion aid station for the 124th Signal Battalion, native of Tarpon Springs, Fla.



Photo by Spc. Samuel Soza

"I got the opportunity to be here to protect my family, friends, and country doing what I've always dreamed of doing." - Pfc. Lance Rollason, A Company, 299th Engineer Battalion, a native of Albuquerque, N.M.



Photo by Sgt. Troy Chatwin

"I'm thankful for my family and I'm thankful that I was born in America." - Capt. Amanda Owens, Supply Officer for the 418th Civil Affairs Battalion.



Photo by Spc. Melissa Walther

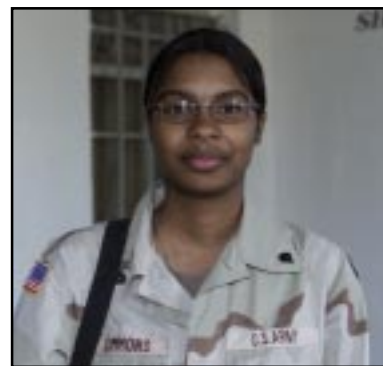


Photo by Spc. Samuel Soza

"I'm thankful that my family is still at home supporting me." - Spc. Kamela J. Simmons, administrative specialist for the 416th Chemical Company, a native of Greenwood, S.C.

"(I'm thankful) that I'm still alive, my daughter is okay and healthy. I'm also thankful for my fiancée." - Pvt. Pulliam Muhammed, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Brigade, a native of Bronx, N.Y.



Photo by Sgt. Troy Chatwin

"I am thankful for my family and I'm thankful for my gunner, Pvt. 1st Class Milliron, and my team leader, Sgt. Hole." - Spc. Patrick Weber, a driver with the 720th Military Police Company and Torrington, Conn. native.



Photo by Spc. Benjamin Kibbey



Local News

Religious Services at FOB Ironhorse

Sunday:

0930 -- Protestant
1100 -- Gospel
1300 -- Catholic
1800 -- LDS
1800 -- Praise and Worship

Wednesday:

1900 -- FHE/Activity (LDS in CMOC)
1900 -- Bible Study

Friday:

1230 -- Muslim
1900 -- Bible Study (124SIG)

Turkey Trot

5k Road Race will be held
0900 Nov. 27.

Sign up every Wed. and Sat,
1130-1330 at the DFAC starting
Oct. 15. Deadline is Nov. 26.

For more information, contact
Capt. Fortner at 534-7511 or 1st
Lt. Noll at 530-6469.

Combined Federal Campaign -- Overseas

Program runs for Nov. 1
through Dec. 10.

Minimum contribution: \$1
per pay period.

Participation is strictly voluntary.

Contribute by cash, check or
payroll deduction to more than
1,400 charitable organizations.

Your donation goes to needs
you feel are most important.

If your unit does not have a
coordinator, contact your next
higher command for more
information.

Weather Forecast

Monday: High: 69 F
Low: 44 F
Winds: SE 15-20 KTS
Partly Cloudy

Tuesday: High: 70 F
Low: 51 F
Winds: SE 15-25 KTS
Mostly Cloudy, Rain, T-Storms

Wednesday: High: 69 F
Low: 53 F
Winds: SW 15-20 KTS
Mostly Cloudy, Rain, T-Storms

Thursday: High: 66 F
Low: 50 F
Winds: NW 10-15 KTS
Partly Cloudy

Friday: High: 66 F
Low: 43 F
Winds: NW 5 KTS
Mostly Sunny, AM Fog, Thick Haze

Movie Schedule

Movies at the Task Force
Ironhorse Soldier's Inn are
shown at 11:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m.
and 8:00 p.m.

Movies listed below are for the 8:00 p.m. showing only.

24 Nov.: Bringing Down The House
25 Nov.: Daddy Daycare
26 Nov.: Just Married
27 Nov.: Kill Bill
28 Nov.: X-Men 2: X-Men United
29 Nov.: Indiana Jones Trilogy
30 Nov.: Fear Dot Com

*Sunday's movies are shown at
2:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. only.*

Reunion/Suicide Prevention Briefs

Briefs will now be held
once a week, Wednesday at
1000 in the Chapel/Movie
Theater at the Soldiers Inn.

Briefs must be given before
a soldier goes on mid-term
leave.

Emergency individual brief-
ings can be arranged through
the chaplain's office.

Prayer Breakfast

A Thanksgiving prayer
breakfast will be held Tuesday,
Nov. 25 starting at 0830 at the
Task Force Ironhorse DFAC.

All are welcome to attend.

PT uniform may be worn if
you are on R&R.

Christmas Mail

To ensure your letters and
packages get to the States
before Christmas, send them no
later than:

Nov. 26 Parcel Airlift Mail
Dec. 4 First Class Letters/
Cards/Priority

If you receive insured packages
that are damaged, keep all the
packing material, wrappers,
insurance endorsement or label
and addresses.

AFRTS Radio

Armed Forces Radio and
Television Service can now be
heard on 93.3 FM, playing the
hits of yesterday and today.



World News

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Most U.S. cell phone users can now switch to a new wireless service without losing their telephone number under a new regulation that raises the stakes in the already competitive wireless market.

Under new rules which took effect on Monday, customers may be quicker to dump their current provider for a rival service now that they can keep their current number. They can also disconnect a home phone and swap that number for a wireless service.

HOUSTON — Until Texas A&M University's 90-year-old bonfire tradition returns to campus, a group of current and former students say they will continue holding the event off-campus.

DENVER - The proposed Big Straw project designed to pipe water from the Colorado-Utah line to the thirsty Front Range could cost more than the state's annual budget of \$13 billion under one scenario presented in a new study to be made public today.

DENVER - Rail transit and a monorail have been eliminated as alternatives to ease traffic congestion in the Interstate 70 corridor between Denver and Glenwood Springs, state and federal highway officials -announced Tuesday.

NEW YORK (AP) - A study released Sunday found that 31 percent of Americans are "highly tech-savvy" people for whom the Internet, cell phones and handheld organizers are more indispensable than TVs and old-fashioned wired phones.

Sports

NFL Standings

American Football Conference

East

New England (9-2)
Miami (7-4)
NY Jets (4-7)
Buffalo (4-7)

North

Cincinnati (6-5)
Baltimore (6-5)
Pittsburgh (4-7)
Cleveland (4-7)

South

Indianapolis (9-2)
Tennessee (9-2)
Houston (4-7)
Jacksonville (2-9)

West

Kansas City (10-1)
Denver (6-5)
Oakland (3-8)
San Diego (2-9)

National Football Conference

East

Dallas (8-3)
Philadelphia (8-3)
NY Giants (4-6)
Washington (4-7)

North

Minnesota (7-4)
Green Bay (6-5)
Chicago (4-7)
Detroit (3-8)

South

Carolina (8-3)
New Orleans (5-6)
Tampa Bay (4-6)
Atlanta (2-9)

West

St. Louis (8-3)
Seattle (7-4)
San Francisco (5-6)
Arizona (3-8)

NFL Sunday's Games:

Pittsburgh 13, Cleveland 6
Indianapolis 17, Buffalo 14
Green Bay 20, San Francisco 10
Minnesota 24, Detroit 14
Dallas 24, Carolina 20
New England 23, Houston 20
Baltimore 44, Seattle 41
Philadelphia 33, New Orleans 20
NY Jets 13, Jacksonville 10
Chicago 19, Denver 10
St. Louis 30, Arizona 27
Kansas City 27, Oakland 24
Tennessee 38, Atlanta 31
Cincinnati 34, San Diego 27
Miami 24, Washington 23

NCAA Football

Southern Miss. 40, (10) TCU 28
(20) Boise St. 31, Fresno St. 17
(13) Miami (Fla.) 34, Rutgers 10
(24) West Virginia 34, Syracuse 23
(5) Michigan 35, (4) Ohio St. 21
(16) Purdue 24, Indiana 16
(6) Georgia 30, Kentucky 10
(24) Oklahoma St. 38, Baylor 21
(9) Tennessee 48, Vanderbilt 0
(21) Pittsburgh 30, Temple 16
(22) Bowling Green 41, Ball St. 14
(18) Miami (Ohio) 49, Ohio 31
(1) Oklahoma 56, Texas Tech 25
Boston College 34, (12) VA Tech 27
Washington 27, (8) Washington St. 19
(3) LSU 17, (15) Mississippi 14
(17) Iowa 27, Wisconsin 21
(2) USC 47, UCLA 22
(19) Kansas St. 24, Missouri 14
Michigan St. 41, Penn St. 10
Clemson 63, South Carolina 17
Hawaii 59, Army 28

NBA Standings

Eastern Conference

Philadelphia (7-7)
Boston (5-7)
Washington (5-7)

New Jersey (5-7)
New York (4-9)
Miami (3-11)
Orlando (1-12)

Central

Indiana (10-2)
Detroit (9-4)
New Orleans (9-4)
Toronto (6-6)
Milwaukee (5-7)
Atlanta (5-9)
Chicago (4-9)
Cleveland (4-10)

Western Conference

Midwest

Dallas (9-4)
Houston (8-4)
Minnesota (8-5)
San Antonio (8-6)
Memphis (6-5)
Denver (7-6)
Utah (7-6)

Pacific

LA Lakers (10-3)
Sacramento (8-4)
Seattle (6-4)
Portland (7-5)
Phoenix (6-6)
LA Clippers (4-5)
Golden State (5-7)

NBA Sunday's Games:

Milwaukee 82, Toronto 62
New Orleans 81, Detroit 80
Sacramento 110, Chicago 99
Seattle 88, Washington 85
Golden State 78, Portland 72
LA Lakers 121, Memphis 89

National Hockey League

(Team, W-L-T, OTL, Pt.)

Eastern Conference Standings

Atlantic

Philadelphia (12-2-4-1, 29)
New Jersey (11-3-4-0, 26)

NY Islanders (9-8-2-0, 20)
NY Rangers (7-7-4-2, 20)
Pittsburgh (5-10-3-1, 14)

Northeast

Boston (11-3-3-3, 28)
Toronto (8-6-5-2, 23)
Buffalo (9-9-2-1, 21)
Montreal (9-10-1-1, 20)
Ottawa (8-7-2-2, 10)

Southeast

Tampa Bay (11-2-3-1, 26)
Atlanta (11-7-3-1, 26)
Florida (8-12-2-0, 18)
Carolina (5-9-7-0, 17)
Washington (5-13-1-1, 12)

Western Conference

Central

St. Louis (12-5-0-1, 25)
Detroit (11-8-2-0, 24)
Chicago (6-9-4-3, 19)
Nashville (8-10-1-0, 17)
Columbus (7-10-2-1, 17)

Northwest

Vancouver (12-5-2-2, 28)
Colorado (12-6-1-1, 26)
Edmonton (10-8-2-0, 22)
Calgary (9-8-0-2, 20)
Minnesota (8-10-3-0, 19)

Pacific

Los Angeles (10-7-1-1, 22)
Anaheim (7-7-2-5, 21)
San Jose (5-6-8-2, 20)
Dallas (8-10-3-0, 19)
Phoenix (6-8-5-1, 18)

NHL Sunday's Games:

Atlanta 1, Phoenix 0
NY Rangers 6, Ottawa 2
Tampa Bay 0, Carolina 0 (OT)

NHL NEWS

After a nine-game layoff, Marc Savard scored to lead Atlanta to a 1-0 victory over Phoenix and a franchise-record four-game winning streak.

